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UNCLAS GUATEMALA 003164

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: GUATEMALAN UNION LEADER'S DEATH: MORE COMMON CRIME

1. (U) Julio Rolando Raquéc, Secretary of the Federation of Workers in the Informal Economy (FSTIG), died after being mugged several blocks from his Guatemala City residence by unidentified individuals on November 30. Raquéc sustained fatal injuries during the robbery and died later the same day. According to the police report, Raquéc and his wife indicated to the police that they had been attacked by unknown men, who shot Raquéc four times while taking his money. The wife believed that the aggressors were gang members who operated in the area. (Comment: Raquéc lived in Zone 6, which is one of the most dangerous parts of the city and has been designated a "red zone" for violence by the GOG).

2. (U) Jose Pinzon, leader of the umbrella union CGTG, reported to PolOff that Raquéc had received several phone threats in May and June 2004. However, Pinzon recognized that Raquéc's death appears to have been a common criminal act. The FSTIG union is small and not widely visible or personally known to PolOffs. The Public Ministry assigned the case to the Special Unit for Homicides, though PolOff has not been able to discuss the case further with the assigned prosecutor.
HAMILTON